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CSD *News Release*

March 28, 2002

AWARD WINNING TAXI DRIVER TO REMAIN IN THE INDUSTRY AFTER GRADUATING FROM COLLEGE

Twenty-eight year-old part-time taxi driver, Krambell Antoine, graduates from Miami-Dade Community College this summer with an associate degree in respiratory therapy, but plans to continue driving a cab even after he has found work in that field.

Why?

“It (the taxi industry) has been good to me,” says Antoine.

In the 18-months that Antoine has been a part-time driver for the Super Yellow Cab company, he has netted two awards with total prize money of \$3,000, a three-day/two night stay at Lucerne Hotel on Miami Beach compliments of the Greater Miami and the Beaches Hotel Association, a round trip airfare for two to anywhere in the continental USA, courtesy of the Greater Miami Visitors and Convention Bureau, a plaque to go with each award, and praise for his kindness from Miami-Dade County District 3 Commissioner, Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler.

Both awards came out of the Taxicab Chauffeur Incentive Program (TCIP), which the Miami-Dade County Consumer Services Department (CSD) implemented in 1998 to help raise customer service standards in the industry.

The incident that led to the awards occurred last May when Peter Gurd, a British visitor to Miami, inadvertently left a bag with his travel documents and all his money in a taxicab. Antoine, who had taken a passenger to the hotel where Gurd was staying, came to the British visitor's assistance, taking him to the police station to file a report and to Miami International Airport in the hope of spotting the cab in which the bag had been left. He also bought lunch for Gurd and offered to lend him money. "Krambell Antoine is a credit to your taxi service," Gurd later wrote to the hotel.

Taxicab drivers like Krambell Antoine make Miami-Dade County "a wonderful place to live and visit," Dr. Carey-Shuler said last August when Antoine was named the County's Taxicab Chauffeur of the Quarter for April – June. She repeated the sentiment last Thursday morning, March 28, when he was named Taxicab Chauffeur of the Year for 2001 at a ceremony at the Commission Chambers in Downtown Miami.

CSD Chauffeur Training Specialist, Mercedes Delgado, thinks Antoine has been good for the industry.

She remembers Antoine as being one of the sharpest students in the Taxicab Chauffeur Apprentice Program (TCAP), which the Department implemented in January 2000, successful completion of which is mandatory for anyone applying for a taxicab chauffeur's registration. She says Antoine's success will be a good example to other drivers undertaking the program.

Of the drivers who were named Chauffeurs of the Quarter last year, only Antoine is a TCAP graduate, the others having gotten their registration before the program was implemented.

Those drivers, Pierre Robillard, Gerald Raphael and Christian Joseph, also received commendation from Commissioner Carey-Shuler at today's ceremony.

She also thanked the travel and hospitality industry representatives who served on the selection panel, presenting each with a commemorative plaque.

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The Miami Dade Consumer Services Department is an agency of Miami-Dade County government that protects consumers through complaint mediation, business regulation, and consumer education. The Department operates the Consumer Hotline (305) 375-3677, a central telephone number for consumer complaints and information.